

VZCZCXRO3857  
PP RUEHROV  
DE RUEHDS #0770/01 0721406  
ZNY SSSSS ZZH  
P 131406Z MAR 07  
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5062  
INFO RUCNIAD/IGAD COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RHMFISS/CJTF HOA PRIORITY  
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 ADDIS ABABA 000770

SIPDIS

NOFORN  
SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR AF/E  
LONDON, PARIS, ROME FOR AFRICA WATCHERS  
CJTF-HOA FOR POLAD

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/13/2017  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PBTS](#) [KPKO](#) [MOPS](#) [ET](#) [ER](#)  
SUBJECT: ETHIOPIA/ERITREA: STATE MINISTER'S CONCERNS ON  
US/UN DISCUSSIONS

REF: STATE 14111 (NOTAL)

Classified By: AMBASSADOR DONALD YAMAMOTO. REASON: 1.4 (B), (D).

11. (S/NF) SUMMARY: State Minister for Foreign Affairs Tekeda Alemu raised two concerns with Ambassador on U.S. discussions at the U.N. on March 6 on a new approach on the Eritrea-Ethiopia border conflict. First, Tekeda said the U.S. should not seek other countries which are friendly to Eritrea, in the hopes of resolving the border conflict with Eritrea. This would overlook Eritrea's violation of UNSCR 1640 (restriction on UN operations) and its activities supporting extremist elements in Somalia and undercutting peace efforts in Darfur, in direct opposition to the AU and international community. Tekeda cautioned against giving in to Eritrean blackmail, especially in replacing UNMEE SRSG Ambassador Ennifar because Eritrea opposes Ennifar. Second, the U.S. had raised last summer the consequences of divided towns and villages during demarcation and the need for &dialogue8 to address these issues to ensure a peaceful demarcation. Finally, Tekeda noted that Ethiopia believes that peaceful resolution of the border ultimately lies with the parties themselves, and that such a resolution cannot be realized until the fundamental differences between the parties are resolved first. The border conflict is only symptomatic of the differences between Eritrea and Ethiopia. Tekeda concluded that President Isaias is not ready to engage Ethiopia in a comprehensive peace discussion, let alone a peaceful resolution of the border conflict. END SUMMARY.

-----  
CONCERNS WITH THE NEW U.S. APPROACH  
-----

12. (S/NF) State Minister Tekeda called the Ambassador into the Foreign Ministry March 12 to raise two concerns by Foreign Minister Seyoum Mesfin and other senior Ethiopian officials over reports from their Mission to the U.N. on the March 6 briefings for the UNSC, EU and AU members, as well as EEBC Witnesses, on a new U.S. approach to resolution of the Eritrea-Ethiopia border conflict. First, the Minister stated that participants told the Ethiopian side that the U.S. was seeking assistance from states who were acceptable to the Eritreans or who could talk to the Eritreans, like Norway, Holland, Japan and other countries. Tekeda said engagement with Eritrea is important and must be encouraged, but cautioned that we not &appease8 or &reward8 or

&overlook8 Eritrea,s indiscretions. Tekeda noted that if countries acceptable to Eritrea take the lead in the border conflict, this could undermine the process by attracting parties which are not neutral.

13. (S/NF) Tekeda noted that it was Eritrea which is in violation of UNSCR 1640. The purpose of UNSCR 1640 was to protest Eritrea,s limiting UNMEE operations, which sets a bad precedence for other UN operations and potentially puts at risk all participants in all UN operations. (NOTE: The Ethiopians cite the case of Eritrea refusing to allow a helicopter to save the life of an Indian soldier who suffered a heart attack, forcing UNMEE to drive the soldier for hours to an area for medivac. END NOTE.) Further, it is Eritrea, Tekeda stressed, that supported extremists in Somalia and attempted to undercut the Abuja Accords on Darfur by supporting elements opposed to Minni Minawi and other supporters of the Abuja Accords. In addition, Tekeda warned that the international community should not dismiss Special Representative of the UN Secretary General (SRSG) for Ethiopian and Eritrea Ambassador Azouz Ennifar just because President Isaias does not like him. Selecting only UN officials acceptable to Isaias will be counterproductive, Tekeda said.

14. (S/NF) Tekeda,s second concern was the issue of divided towns and villages during demarcation: to ensure a peaceful resolution of the border, there needs to be a dialogue to resolve these issues. Ethiopia agreed with the U.S. on the concerns of divided towns and villages creating new refugee flows and potentially preventing a peaceful resolution of the border conflict. Tekeda noted that the EEBC commissioners also considered this a challenge and tried to address it.

ADDIS ABAB 00000770 002 OF 002

-----  
ETHIOPIA: THE BORDER IS ONLY ONE PROBLEM  
-----

15. (S/NF) Tekeda stated that resolution of the border depends on a comprehensive dialogue between both countries. Ultimately, a peaceful demarcation of the border lies in both parties resolving their problems. The border is only symptomatic of the deeper problems which divide both countries. Until President Isaias is ready to come to the peace table, there will be no peace, Tekeda stated. He reasserted that Ethiopia is ready to end the border conflict. The Ambassador noted to Tekeda that the U.S. was looking to other countries to take the lead (reftel), and that no one was departing from the fundamental precepts of the Algiers Accords.

16. (S/NF) COMMENT: Tekeda and other senior Ethiopian leadership are deeply concerned that countries other than the U.S. could take a biased view or be moved to be more flexible to Eritrea, while ignoring Eritrea,s bad behavior and its destabilizing activities in Somalia and Darfur. Tekeda reflects the firm belief that the U.S. and only the U.S. can help bring both parties together to resolve the fundamental problems which divide Ethiopia and Eritrea. For now, Somalia is Ethiopia,s primary focus, and the border issue will only distract the Ethiopians from the more important priority for them and the international community of stabilizing Somalia. END COMMENT.  
YAMAMOTO